Action Plan for Alternative Education Programs (A5 and A6)

A5 Programs: A district-operated and district-controlled facility designed to provide services to at-risk populations with unique needs

A6 Programs: A district-operated instructional program in a nondistrict-operated institution or school serving youth who are State Agency Children (SAC). These youth are the responsibility of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Department of Community Based Services (DCBS), and the Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services (DMHMR). *The quality of educational services provided to State Agency Children is the responsibility of the school district where the youth reside.*

Improving Outcomes for Students in Alternative Education Programs

Background

After reviewing the findings from a review of 40 A5 programs by the Kentucky Center for School Safety, the study on alternative programs provided by Kentucky Youth Advocates, annual reports from KECSAC, the Kentucky Performance Reports for students in A5 and A6 programs and other data, the Kentucky Board of Education directed the Department to develop an Action Plan to improve outcomes for students in alternative placement.

Overall, improving outcomes for these students will require:
- Increasing program accountability for the progress of individual students during placement, through improved data management
- Better coordination among programs and partners working with alternative education at the state and local levels
- Establishing standards of quality and practice that are shared at the state and local levels
- A close examination of how programs and services are funded, including leveraging funding to ensure equity and quality in new programs and to discontinue ineffective programs that continue poor practices

This Action Plan is organized around four major categories:

- **Administrative Structures**
- **Accountability**
- **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**
- **School Culture**

1

Administrative Structure:

Goal: To develop data collection and reporting mechanisms that will identify and track key elements of alternative education programs (classification, location, students, teachers, funding) to support decision-making and policy formation. Data should be able to be aggregated at the program, school, district and state levels.

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
1.1	Identify all A5 and A6 programs currently operating by name, location or school code, and school district.	OTL	November 2007	**1.** This activity was completed in November 2007. However, it will need to be regularly updated due to the changing nature of A5 and A6 programs (new programs are created, and some programs are eliminated).	**1.** Dropout Prevention Branch	**1.** Completed in November, 2007 *See Goal 1.2, Activity 2 for additional information on future activities on the identification of all A5 and A6 programs.*
1.2	Determine capacity of KDE data systems to track A5 & A6 programs, students and teachers longitudinally.	ODSS OTL	July 2008-Ongoing July 2008-Ongoing	**1.** Identify capacity of Kentucky Instructional Data System (KIDS) to track students, programs and teachers longitudinally. **2.** Identify capacity of Infinite Campus (IC) to collect this information; work with IC to implement capacity to capture this information.	**1.** Bob Hackworth KIDS Team **2.** Dropout Prevention Branch	**1.** KIDS currently has the ability to track students, programs, and district finances longitudinally. Teacher certification information and High School Feedback report data will be added, tentatively scheduled to begin in August 2008. All schools and districts in Kentucky are represented within KIDS, including A5 and A6 programs. **2.** KDE will contact school districts as they implement Infinite Campus to request names of all A5 and A6 programs. Those programs without school location codes will be assigned them.
1.3	KDE will determine if technology hardware/software/connectivity are adequate for A5 & A6 programs.	OET OTL	June 2008	**1.** The Office of Education Technology (OET) will survey school districts to determine education technology readiness in A5 programs (hardware/software/connectivity). **2.** OET will assess equity issues in A5 programs. **3.** KECSAC will conduct a survey of A6 programs to determine current status of technology.	**1.** OET David Couch **2.** OET David Couch **3.** KECSAC Ronnie Nolan	**1.** The technology readiness survey for A5 programs has been completed and analyzed. Overall, results show no significant gaps between technology available for A5 programs v. A1 schools. **2.** Although some differences in technology access were noted, the survey indicated that standards for A5 programs are similar to A1 schools. **3.** The technology readiness survey for A6 programs is complete. The analysis has revealed that overall, the percentage of computers (ADA) is above the state average; however, there are wide variances in the availability of computers for students in different districts/programs.

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
1.4	KDE will determine if there are funding equity issues in services/resources provided in A5 and A6 programs.	OTL	August 2008	**1.** OTL will analyze amount and use of funding provided by KECSAC and KCSS to individual programs and for state-level activities. **2.** OTL will determine the extent to which students in alternative placements are receiving supplemental services, have access to ILPs and advising services, Extended School Services, and other instructional supports as compared to the general population and their peers in traditional schools in the district.	**1.** Nijel Clayton **2.** Nijel Clayton Faith Thompson	**1.** Amount of funding provided by KECSAC for A6 programs is easily accessible. The budget for the Kentucky Center for School Safety was reduced by 58% during the last legislative session. The funds to school districts provided by KCSS will reflect these cuts. It is unclear at this time whether budget cuts will result in fewer A5 programs. A request will be made to KCSS to provide information on how KCSS funds are being spent at the local level. **2.** ILP reports will be available after June 30 to show the number of students with ILPs and the completion rates. These reports will only be available for A5 and A6 programs with location codes. Students receiving ESS support will be reflected in Infinite Campus once it's fully implemented.
1.4	KDE will determine if there are funding equity issues in services/resources provided in A5 and A6 programs.	OTL ODSS	August 2008 Ongoing	**3.** OTL and ODSS will work collaboratively to conduct a study of how alternative programs are funded. Recommendations will be developed, if needed, to ensure that funds flow to alternative education to provide equitable services/resources (i.e., per pupil expenditures are at least equivalent to per pupil expenditures in traditional settings). **4.** ODSS will assist with the analysis of budget allocations and expenditure reports to determine if alternative education programs are receiving equitable treatment.	**3.** Michelle Sutton Nijel Clayton **4.** Michelle Sutton	**3. & 4.** Initial steps have been taken to determine the data necessary to conduct a study of how the alternative programs are funded. Current review has identified within the MUNIS accounting system, expenditure reports associated with the A5 and A6 programs with location codes. In addition, within the Student Information System, students have been identified as being enrolled in specific A5 and A6 programs. Continued research and collaboration will need to occur between OTL and ODSS to ensure accuracy of the data and how this data can be used to ensure equitable services.

3

Accountability:

Goal: To Improve the Academic Performance of Students in A5 and A6 Alternative Education Programs Through Increased Accountability

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
2.1	Identify additional methods of assessing student academic progress during placement in A5 and A6 alternative education programs.	OAA OTL	December 2008 January 2009 Summer 2009	**1.** A6 Programs– KDE will choose a diagnostic assessment that can be used for pre and post testing in reading/math in A6 programs. Budget and RFP will be created. **2.** A6 programs will use the diagnostic assessment with incoming and exiting students. Data will be fed to the state level for analysis and accountability. **3.** A5 Programs – Districts receive training in the issues of having a pre-post testing model. A5 schools would be encouraged to adopt a pre/post test model. Data sent to the state level for analysis.	**1.** Ken Draut **2.** Ken Draut **3.** Ken Draut Jamie Spugnardi	**1.** KDE will create an RFP for a pre and post-test for all A6 programs. **2.** Guidelines for pre and post-testing in A6 programs will be developed with input from A6 program administrators and KDE Office of Assessment and Accountability. **3.** This activity will be addressed after the pre/post test is implemented in A6 programs. Lessons learned from the A6 process will be shared with A5 programs.
2.2	Increase accountability for A5 and A6 programs, including student performance and academic growth during placement.	OAA OTL	September 2008 September 2009 (A6)	**1.** The Office of Assessment and Accountability (OAA) will continue to create accountability reports based on statewide test results for A6 programs. (A5 program reports are dependent on success in the Administrative Function Goal.) **2.** OAA will use the data from the pre/post tests from A6 programs to create a unique accountability report for each A6 program.	**1.** Ken Draut **2.** Ken Draut	**1.** OAA will generate accountability reports for A6 programs and A5 programs with location codes. **2.** After full implementation of the pre and post-test in A6 programs, OAA will generate accountability reports. Afterwards, as A5 programs implement pre and post-tests, OAA will generate the same type of accountability reports.
2.3	Establish accountability measures for successful student transitions (into and out of A5 & A6 programs).	OAA OTL	September 2008 Ongoing	**1.** Determine how accountability for successful student transition will be established and measured. Develop functionality within the Student Information System and/or Individual Learning Plan to support planning, tracking and evaluating transitions into and out of alternative placements.	**1.** Ken Draut Nijel Clayton KECSAC	**1.** Collaborative discussions will take place regarding the ability of SIS and the ILP to evaluate successful transitions in A5 and A6 programs. KECSAC has conducted a transition study for State Agency Children (SAC). This information will assist with KDE accountability measures.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:

Goal: To ensure that students in alternative education programs are receiving adequate and appropriate curriculum, instruction and assessment to at least that level which could be expected if the student was in the traditional school (A1)

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
3.1	Teachers in A5 and A6 programs will be, to the extent possible, appropriately certified and capable of delivering high-quality curriculum, instruction and assessment.	OTL	March 2008 October 2008 October 2008	**1.** Collaborate with EPSB to consider the current regulation governing teachers in alternative programs to determine if a change in the regulation is warranted and advisable based on the need to improve student achievement. (potential revision of 16 KAR 4:010) **2.** Improve leadership and teaching capacity. Utilize KDE services, such as eWalk Tool, to assess instructional effectiveness. Consider non-traditional ways to offer access to the full curriculum, including mechanisms such as peer-to-peer assistance networks, online PD, and study tours to higher performing alternative education programs. **3.** Seek multiple options and pathways, collaborating with postsecondary and community partners, to support student learning through non-traditional approaches (dual credit, career& technical education programs, secondary GED, etc.).	**1.** Nijel Clayton **2.** Nijel Clayton Division of Secondary & Virtual Learning **3.** Faith Thompson	**1.** Through discussions and input from the Alternative Education Advisory Committee, no changes will be requested in 16 KAR 4:010 (EPSB teacher certification). The flexibility is needed in A5 and A6 programs; however, high standards for teacher quality will be maintained. **2.** Preliminary discussions have occurred with KVS to explore possibility of professional development. Study tours of "Model Alternative Programs" will be addressed after model sites have been designated. Improving leadership and instructional capacity will be addressed through assistance with the KDE Office of Leadership and School Improvement (see Goal 4.1, Activities 1 and 2). **3.** Ongoing collaboration with the Secondary Education Branch and the Division of Career and Technical Education will provide additional pathways to graduation for students in A5 and A6 programs.
3.2	Students in A5 and A6 programs will receive the same support and/or supplemental services as students in A1 schools.	OTL	January 2009 September 2008 January 2009	**1.** Analyze and report use of ESS in alternative education programs. **2.** Implement diagnostic measures in mathematics and literacy to identify student needs. Consider the implications for alternative education programs in regard to SB 130 and Response to Intervention. **3.** KDE will add functionality to Infinite Campus to identify students in A5 and A6 placement. Examine feasibility of online advising and academic services to supplement alternative education program staff.	**1.** Faith Thompson **2.** Nijel Clayton **3.** Nijel Clayton Faith Thompson Julia Harmon	**1.** When fully implemented, Infinite Campus will provide this information. **2.** The Achieve3000 program will be implemented into 20 A6 programs as an instructional intervention. SB 130 specifies that individual students' intervention plans will be included in their ILP. **3.** Infinite Campus (IC) will provide information on students entering and leaving (transitions) A5 and A6 programs. IC will also provide the length of placement for students. Access to demographic information on students in A5 and A6 programs, such as gender, ethnicity, exceptional education, free/reduced lunch (poverty), will be available. A request has been made to IC to report reasons for alternative education placement (suspension, expulsion, academic need, other) but it is not clear if it will be possible to collect this type of information.

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
3.3	Designate specific A5 and A6 programs as "Model Sites" with exemplary practices in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	OTL OLSI	2008-09 School Year	**1.** Identify model A5 and A6 programs in the state that offer full access to the curriculum and have proven success with increasing student achievement.	**1.** Nijel Clayton Libby Taylor Jamie Keene	**1.** The Alternative Education Advisory Committee has determined criteria for alternative education programs (A5 and A6) to be considered "Model Sites." The process of designating "Model Sites" will occur during the 2008-09 school year.
			August 2008	**2.** Examine the possibility of leveraging state-as-one-customer buying power for curricular/credit recovery resources currently in use in many A5 & A6 programs. Examine possibility of same idea with the provision of high quality curricula and professional development with Kentucky Virtual Schools.	**2.** Chris Powell Jennifer Carroll	**2.** Preliminary discussions have occurred with KVS to examine the feasibility of state-provided curricula and professional development.
			April 2008	**3.** Identify proven models of community-based support for alternative education programs.	**3.** Shaun Murphy Monica Simpson	**3.** The KDE Community Support Branch has conducted a survey of Community Educators to determine the level of community-based support for A5 and A6 programs. The survey information is currently being analyzed.
			March 2009	**4.** The Bureau of Learning and Results Services (BLRS) will host regional visits to designated A5 and A6 Model Sites to showcase best practices. This will serve as an ongoing professional development experience to showcase exemplary practices in A5 and A6 programs.	**4.** Nijel Clayton Michael Miller	**4.** After the "Model Sites" are designated, the Bureau of Learning and Results Services will host regional visits to the programs to showcase best practices.

School Culture:

Goal: **To ensure cultures of high expectations for students and educators are embedded in alternative programs. Consider how rigor, relevance and relationships can be strengthened and reinforced for students in alternative education programs**

	Objective	KDE Office	Date	Activities	Person Responsible	Status
4.1	KDE will implement program improvement measures to ensure A5 and A6 programs provide equitable educational services.	OLSI OTL	Fall 2008	**1.** The Office of Leadership and School Improvement will include alternative education programs in all scholastic audits and reviews and will ensure that the culture of the alternative education program is analyzed and documented within the context of the overall school culture. As a result of the audit or review, specific recommendations will be provided to improve educational and support services to students in alternative placements.	**1.** OLSI	**1.** OLSI will include A5 and A6 programs as part of the Scholastic Audit and Review process.
			Fall 2008	**2.** KDE will utilize Voluntary Partnership Assistance Teams (VPAT), State Assistance Teams (SAT), Network Assistance Teams (NAT), Highly Skilled Educators (HSE), and Achievement Gap Coordinators to assist alternative education programs in the provision of quality educational services.	**2.** Debbie Hicks	**2.** KDE is exploring the possibility of providing assistance teams to alternative education programs. These teams are currently assigned to school districts and the school superintendent determines which schools/programs are to be served.
			Fall 2008 Ongoing	**3.** Utilize the Individual Learning Plan to monitor student achievement in regard to academic and non-academic goals.	**3.** Faith Thompson Julia Harmon	**3**. ILPs currently include state assessment results, and will include interventions as a result of SB 130. These results will be utilized to monitor student achievement.

7